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Next Meeting: November 6, 2002

10:00 a.m. – Thorburn Center - Ingham ISD (Rooms B and C)

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of October 2, 2002, Meeting
10:00 a.m.

Present: Kathleen Clegg, Patt Clement, Pansy Coleman, Janice Fialka, Ric Hogerheide, Nancy Jackson, Jill Jacobs, Patricia Keller, Brenda Kotsis, Shari Krishnan, Jim Kubaiko, Peggy McNeilly, Pam Mish, Bob Opsommer, Ginny Palubin, Gloria Anderson (for Sue Rabidioux), Debs Roush, Deb Russell, Steve Schwartz, Deborah Smith, Donald Spencer, Don Trap, Laurie VanderPloeg, Randall VanGasse, Colette Ward, Steve Wessels, Herb Yamanishi
Ex-Officio members: Mark Larson, Rosanne Renauer, Jacquelyn Thompson

Absent: Cheryl Ervin, Shari Falvay, Larry Simpson

OSE/EIS Staff: David Brock, Fran Loose

Guests: Deborah Canja, Linda Keway, Paul Kubicek, Sandi Laham, Chris Lerchen, Patti Nowak, Jerry Oermann, Jon Wurdock

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Shari Krishnan.

Roll Call

Roll call was taken and a quorum was present.

Introduction of Guests

Guests attending the meeting were introduced.

Amend/Approve Proposed Agenda

The agenda of the October 2, 2002, meeting was considered. The SEAC agenda item X. was amended as follows:

- Report on House Bills, 6455, 6456, 6457 and 6458 by Randy Vangasse

Steve Wessels moved, seconded by Ginny Palubin to approve the agenda as amended. The motion carried.

Amend/Approve Minutes

The minutes of the June 5, 2002, meeting were considered. Ginny Palubin moved, seconded by Ric Hogerhide, to approve the minutes. The motion carried.

Public Comment

None

Chairperson's Report – Shari Krishnan

On behalf of the Executive Committee, Chairperson Shari Krishnan, thanked all those who attended the retreat expressing appreciation for all of the hard work. Following the retreat, the Executive Committee met to discuss SEAC member communication plans. SEAC members are asked to complete a communication card. This card will simply be used as a tool, stored as a “casual” piece of information in the SEAC membership database.

Subcommittees have been assigned based on the member's first choice noted on the subcommittee preference cards completed at the retreat. Members who did not complete and return a preference or were not at the retreat have been assigned to the Operations Subcommittee. Subcommittee assignments may be changed if SEAC members should decide that they would feel of more value to another group.

The SEAC Inclusive Education recommendation was reviewed at the Michigan State Board of Education meeting held on September 12, 2002. Steve Wessels reported that Mrs. Straus was one of the drafters of the original policy and upon her review of the Policy, Mrs. Straus was surprised that the recommendation did not highlight a continued support for a full continuum of services. Mrs. Straus has indicated that more emphasis does need to be put on a full continuum of services, and that the State Board will need a more clear reference of Michigan's position. Currently, the Inclusive Education proposal is out for public comment. David Brock added that an additional public hearings have been scheduled for October 29 and 30, 2002, at the Focus Hope Community Center in Detroit. With the addition of other hearings, the public comment is extended through October 31, 2002. Summaries of the public comment regarding the Inclusive Education document may be available at the November 6, 2002, SEAC meeting.

Discussion followed.

State Department Report – Jacquelyn Thompson

Superintendent of Public Instruction, Thomas D. Watkins Jr., attended the SEAC Executive Committee meeting held just prior to the Committee of the Whole. Mr. Watkins has been focusing on the Michigan Department of Education having a specific and collective vision. Mr. Watkins indicated there needs to be support of a common Michigan Department of Education position regarding the federal agenda. Mr. Watkins challenged SEAC to provide the Committee's recommendations as to what to include on the Department's Federal agenda.

The State Improvement Grant was recently awarded a one-year \$549,000 supplemental grant to focus on the issue of Personnel Supply and Demand.

The Request for Proposal for the Integrated Behavior Supports initiative will be completed soon. This initiative will focus on one of the State Board of Education's priorities relating to integrated learning and focus on low performing schools.

Discussion followed.

State Board Meeting Report – Jacquelyn Thompson

David Brock indicated that one Intermediate School District plan is scheduled to be reviewed in October and one is scheduled to be reviewed in December. ISDs are beginning to take advantage of the ability to make modifications to existing plans. One ISD is rewriting its entire plan.

Information Items

A. Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process (CIMP) – Fran Loose

Fran Loose reported that last year's Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process (CIMP) Steering Committee focused on General Supervision and Birth to Five compliance issues and developed strategic directives in each area. This year implementation is beginning on those directives. During the 2002-2003 school year, the CIMP work groups will address two areas: school age students reaching challenging educational standards and secondary students transitioning effectively to their next steps in jobs, education, and community. The general steering committee and the school age committee will begin meeting during the month of October. The secondary transition committee will begin its work in January.

B. State Improvement Grant (SIG) – Fran Loose

The new SIG supplemental grant will assist with the funding of the Personnel Development Collaborative (PDC). A letter will be forwarded regarding the second round of the PDC which is specifically designed for ten, eight-member ISD and LEA teams. The spring meeting is scheduled for May 20-22. Due to the increase in available data, the next PDC will be heavily data driven. Once formal invitations are sent to districts, electronic copies will be sent to all SEAC members.

The statewide transition follow-up survey will soon be in the mail. Surveys will be forwarded through ISDs to every Student ages 16-26 who received special education services and exited school in 2001. The data from the survey are expected to support federal compliance and assist with effective communication for transition personnel development. It is also expected that the data gathered will be a good resource for possible future CIMP work.

C. House Bills 6455, 6456, 6457, 6458 – Randy VanGasse

State Representative Doug Hart, a Republican from Rockford, Michigan, has introduced the above House Bills in an effort to “unify state education administration and programming within the Department of Education.” If passed, these bills would move the following functions back into the Department of Education:

- Administration of the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP)
- Administration of the Center for Education Performance and Information (CEPI)
- Administration of Michigan Virtual University
- Administration of Michigan Commission on Asia in the Schools
- Administration of Vocational Education
- Administration of Adult Education

SEAC Guest, Deborah Canja, indicated that if you visit the Michiganlegislature.gov web-site you can select categories of interest and review electronic updates as they are posted.

Action Items

- None

Ex-Officio Reports

Institutions of Higher Education — Mark Larson reported that the special education faculty of IHEs meet on a monthly basis. Currently, the group is focusing on accreditation standards and a continuous improvement model for their programs as well as reviewing the reading programs that they offer training in throughout the state.

Discussion followed.

Michigan Department of Career Development/Rehabilitation Services – Rosanne Renauer introduced herself to new SEAC members and provided a brief description how the MDCD and Rehabilitation Services works with individuals to assist with employment outcomes. The Department also works with transition issues and they are also very interested in IDEA reauthorization and how it relates to transition.

Priority Setting

The SEAC reviewed the list of priorities that were generated at the end of the 2001-2002 year. The Committee was given an opportunity to make additional suggestions as to other priorities that may have surfaced since the last list was generated.

Committee Reports

Operations — Ginny Palubin - None

Policy — Steve Wessels - None

State Improvement Plan - None

Member Issues

Laurie VanderPloeg reported that the Michigan Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Annual convention will be held February 26-28, 2003, at the Grand Plaza Hotel in Grand Rapids Michigan. Presenters will be covering many of the topics discussed at today's SEAC meeting. The Supply & Demand strategies group will be working in coordination with the CEC and Michigan Education Association (MEA) on an institute for teachers to be held June 22-24, 2003, at the Western Michigan University Conference Center. The institute is targeting entry level general and special education teachers.

Paul Kubicek noted that the Michigan Association of Learning Disabled Educators conference will be held October 17-19, 2002.

Herb Yamanishi reported that the Learning Disabilities Association of Michigan will hold its annual conference on November 11 & 12, 2002, at the Kellogg Conference Center.

Future Agenda Items

The request was made to include legislative updates as a regular agenda item.

Meeting Summary and Communication Plan

Due to time constraints, members were asked to develop their own key points to be communicated to their organizations. At the November 6 meeting SEAC will begin to collectively recommend key points or meeting highlights.

The meeting was adjourned to subcommittee meetings.

Monica Butler
Recording Secretary

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Executive Committee
Minutes of October 2, 2002, Meeting
8:45 a.m.

Present: David Brock, Kathleen Clegg, Shari Krishnan, Sandi Laham, Fran Loose, Pam Mish, Ginny Palubin, Jacquelyn Thompson, Randall VanGasse, Steve Wessels
Guests: Thomas D. Watkins, Jr., Superintendent of Public Instruction, and Pam Wong, Chief of Staff

State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Tom Watkins, met with the SEAC Executive Committee. The scheduled agenda was set aside in order to take advantage of the opportunity to talk with Mr. Watkins. The Executive Committee will meet during lunch to discuss SEAC communication issues.

Jacqueline Thompson began by providing Mr. Watkins with introductions of the members present and a summary of the functions of subcommittees that support SEAC.

Mr. Watkins provided the Executive Committee with his “10,000 foot” perspective of how SEAC can fit into what the Department is doing today. Being mindful of living in a democracy we need to understand the difference between providing input and decision-making. SEAC is part of the process of gathering information. SEAC needs to assist with finding ways of delivering the services needed and how to break down the silos in education.

Mr. Watkins stressed that as the SEAC completes its work there are some key ideas that should be kept in the forefront - first being the State Board of Education’s overarching priority of putting special emphasis on under-performing schools. Mr. Watkins indicated that if we are not helping to lift up those schools we are not doing our job. As well, SEAC needs to be mindful of what is happening at the federal level with regard to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). We need to be sure we are not just doing the right thing for some kids, but being sure that we are giving all kids the education that they deserve.

Mr. Watkins challenged SEAC to provide the State Board of Education with their top three priorities. In doing so, the Michigan Department of Education can develop a federal agenda that can be carried to Washington showing a cohesiveness between general and special education, again breaking down the silos. As well, Mr. Watkins asked SEAC to question how their meetings are of value and that they are serving the people that we are trying to serve. Is there an opportunity to meet less often to allow more money to be put back in the hands of children? We exist to serve children, is what we’re doing adding value for them? Also, we need to review how we use our federal money. We talk about inclusion and education. What about the money? We should begin to view the Michigan Department of Education as an annex of the federal government and using not abusing the resources we have and be sure to utilize them to their full potential. We also need to make sure that we are in on-going communication, because it is a critical part of what we are doing.

Mr. Watkins spoke about finding ways to cross-connect the offices within the MDE and even the possibility of cross-connecting conferences. The flow of communication needs to be two-way, because together we are better. He encouraged building coalitions and unholy alliances, and challenged SEAC to build alliances with those outside the disabilities community.

Mr. Watkins also discussed the latest MDE press release announcing the support of Representative Dick Hart's House bills 6454, 6455, 6456, 6457, 6458. This bill calls for bringing the following functions back into the Department of Education:

- Administration of the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP)
- Administration of the Center for Education Performance and Information (CEPI)
- Administration of Michigan Virtual University
- Administration of Michigan Commission on Asia
- Administration of Vocational Education
- Administration of Adult Education

Discussion followed.

Review of Today's Agenda

A) Subcommittee Membership

Deferred to Committee of the Whole

B) Priority Setting

Deferred to Committee of the Whole

Future Agenda Development

None

State Department Report

None

Subcommittee Reports

Operations — Ginny Palubin - none

SIP — Pam Mish - none

Policy — Steve Wessels - none

Miscellaneous – Reconvened 12:00 Meeting

The Executive Committee met during lunch to discuss communication issues that could not be addressed during the regularly scheduled meeting.

- The Operations Subcommittee will address the different types of information that the SEAC would like to review and what is the most efficient way for members to receive the communication. The subcommittee will also report out monthly, the status of any current legislation that is of interest to SEAC.
- A "Clue sheet" for the SEAC handbooks will be generated which will include different pieces of information that may be of value to SEAC members. This information could include web-site addresses and helpful hints on where to find information and how to get to it, i.e., "where to click"

- It has been suggested that there be an OSE/EIS direct point of contact for the Executive Committee and SEAC Chairperson. It is undetermined at this time who that will be.
- Pam Mish indicated that the Executive Committee should address Mr. Watkins' suggestion of meeting less often.
- It was suggested that any press releases generated from the State Board of Education be forwarded to the SEAC listserv.